value of cigarettes proposed to be exported; and

(c) the details of the agreement reached with Russia in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (c). Exports take place not on the basis of specific permissions given by Government but in terms of the Export-Import Policy, and the bilateral trade protocol. A provision for export of 3 billion pieces of Cigarettes to Russia has been made in the Trade Protocol for the year 1992.

[*Translation*]

Promotion of Firemen at Chakeri Air Force Station

711. SHRI KESRI LAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an examination for promotion of Firemen of Chakeri Air Force Station was held recently;

(b) if so, whether the candidates declared successful in the said examination, have been granted promotion;

(c) if not, the reasons for denying promotion to the successful candidates;

(d) the time by which all the candidates declared successful are likely to be promoted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) to (d). A Trade Test was conducted to fill up one vacancy of Fireman Grade I and Three vacancies of Leading Hand Fire (Ordinary Grade) on 27.7.1991. Since formal Trade Test was not prescribed for promotion to Fireman Grade I, the results of the test for this post were held invalid. Further, since the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) was found to be constituted in accordance with the old Recruitment Rules, its proceedings have been held invalid. A fresh DPC was found to be constituted in accordance with the old Recruitment Rules, its proceedings have been held invalid. A fresh DPC is being convened for the selection of the eligible candidates. The successful candidates are likely to be promoted by the end of March 1992.

Loans for Research and Development Activities

712. SHRI GOVINDRAO NIKAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide loans without interest to private firms for Research and Development activities; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard alongwith the terms and conditions fixed therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). The commercial banks do not provide loans without interest to any person. The grant of loans to private firms for undertaking research activity including that for development/upgradation of new/existing technology is not considered as an activity under the purview of priority sector lending of commercial banks. Loans are provided by the banks for setting up of industries etc. for productive purposes after the aviability of the projects have been assessed taking into consideration the use of technologies by the entrepreneurs. The rates of interest to be charged by banks on their advances are according to the directives issued by Re-